

Stories in Verse

Adoff, Jaime

The Death of Jayson Porter

In the Florida projects, sixteen-year-old Jayson struggles with the harsh realities of his life which include an abusive mother, a drug-addicted father, and not fitting in at his predominately white school, which bring him to the brink of suicide.

Connor, Leslie

Dead on Town Line

A murdered teen's experience of her afterlife includes her efforts to have her body found and to provide comfort to her loved ones.

Corrigan, Eireann

Splintering

Relates, in a series of poems from different perspectives, the events and after-effects of an intruder's violent attack on a family.

Frost, Helen

Keesha's House

Seven teens facing such problems as pregnancy, closeted homosexuality, and abuse each describe in poetic forms what caused them to leave home and where they found home again.

Fullerton, Alma

Walking on Glass

A teenage boy recounts, in a free verse journal, his attempts to come to terms with the realities of his mother's near-death coma.

Grimes, Nikki

Dark Sons

Alternating poems compare and contrast the conflicted feelings of Ishmael, son of the Biblical patriarch Abraham, and Sam, a teenager in New York City, as they try to come to terms with being abandoned by their fathers and with the love they feel for their younger stepbrothers.

Hemphill, Stephanie

Things Left Unsaid

After a lifetime of conforming to the image of what her parents and high school friends want her to be, Sarah must come to terms with her own identity when her destructive best friend tries to commit suicide.

Herrick, Steven

The Simple Gift

In this free-verse novel, sixteen-year-old Billy leaves behind his drunken, abusive father, takes refuge in an abandoned freight train, falls in with the wealthy, restless Caitlin and discovers the true meaning of friendship and family.

High, Linda

Sister Slam and the Poetic Motormouth Road Trip

In this novel told in slam verse, best friends and aspiring poets Laura and Twig embark on a road trip after graduating from high school, from Pennsylvania to New York City, to compete at slam poetry events

Hopkins, Ellen

Burned

Seventeen-year-old Pattyn, the eldest daughter in a large Mormon family, is sent to her aunt's Nevada ranch for the summer, where she temporarily escapes her alcoholic, abusive father and finds love and acceptance, only to lose everything when she returns home.

Hopkins, Ellen

Crank

Kristina Snow is the perfect daughter, but she meets a boy who introduces her to drugs, and becomes a very different person, struggling to control her life and her mind.

Hopkins, Ellen

Impulse

Three teens who meet at Reno, Nevada's Aspen Springs mental hospital after each has attempted suicide connect with each other in a way they never have with their parents or anyone else in their lives.

Janeczko, Paul

Worlds Afire

In this collection of "eyewitness" poems, the excitement and anticipation of attending the circus on July 6, 1944 in Hartford, Connecticut, turns to horror when a fire engulfs the circus tent, killing nearly 180 people, mostly women and children.

Koertge, Ronald

The Brimstone Journals

In a series of short interconnected poems, students at a high school nicknamed Brimstone reveal the violence existing and growing in their lives.

Levithan, David

The Realm of Possibility

A variety of students at the same high school describe their ideas, experiences, and relationships in a series of interconnected free verse stories.

Sones, Sonya

One of Those Hideous Books Where the Mother Dies

Fifteen-year-old Ruby Milliken leaves her best friend, her boyfriend, her aunt, and her mother's grave in Boston and reluctantly flies to Los Angeles to live with her father, a famous movie star who divorced her mother before Ruby was born.

Sones, Sonya

What My Girlfriend Doesn't Know

Fourteen-year-old Robin Murphy is so unpopular at high school that his name is slang for "loser," and so when he begins dating the beautiful and popular Sophie her reputation plummets, but he finds acceptance as a student in a drawing class at Harvard.

Turner, Ann

Hard Hit

A rising high school baseball star faces his most difficult challenge when his father is diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

Wild, Margaret

One Night

In this novel written in free verse and narrated by alternating characters, a teenaged girl decides to have her baby and care for it on her own after a "one night stand" results in pregnancy.. Filled with love, fear, and the tough choices born of casual acts, One Night is a passionate and compellingly readable novel about teen life, the hardships of parenthood and the joy and forgiveness between family and friends.

Williams, Julie

Escaping Tornado Season: a Story in Poems

Poems describe how thirteen-year-old Allie, living with her grandparents in a small Minnesota town in the 1960s, struggles to cope with her father's recent death, being abandoned by her mother, and trying to fit in at school.

Yeomans, Ellen

Rubber Houses

A novel in verse that relates seventeen-year-old Kit's experiences as her younger brother is diagnosed with and dies of cancer and as she withdraws into and gradually emerges from her grief.